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FRANK REED GROVER.

By J. SEYMOUR CURREY.

Mr. Frank R. Grover's death occurred at Evanston on the 10th of December, 1919, after a short illness, in the sixty-second year of his age. Mr. Grover was born in Lyons Township, Cook County, September 17th, 1858, and as a member of his father's family became a resident of Evanston in 1866. Here he attended the public school of the village, finally graduating at the High School in the class of 1877. Later he took a course in the Union College of Law while the eminent reviser of the statutes of Illinois, Harvey B. Hurd, was dean. After being admitted to the bar in 1883, Mr. Grover engaged in independent practice of the law until 1887, when he formed a partnership with John W. Ela which continued during the lifetime of the latter. Mr. Ela died in 1903, but his name in the partnership has continued to the present time.

Mr. Grover was married to Ella Florence Smith in 1884, and their son, Mortimer C. Grover, in later years became a member of his father's law firm, and he continues as his successor. Mr. Grover's interest in public affairs developed at an early age and he was a regular and constant attendant at public meetings where he participated in the discussions of neighborhood affairs. Throughout his life he was a model citizen in this respect forming and cherishing ideals which he manfully defended on every occasion, never hesitating to take issue on any subject of public interest whenever and wherever a champion was needed.

In former days Mr. Grover became a member of the village board of trustees, the youngest member of that body ever elected, and when, in 1892, Evanston was incorporated under a city form of government, he was elected as the first city attorney and corporation counsel, and in this capacity he rendered valuable service in organizing the new departments. He also in collaboration with George W. Hess, revised and codified the laws and ordinances of the city.

At the formation of the Evanston Historical Society in 1898, Harvey B. Hurd was elected its first president and Mr. Grover vice-president. When Mr. Hurd died in 1906, Mr. J. Seymour Currey, who had been secretary up to that time, was elected president and Mr. Grover continued as vice-president, but in 1917, he was elected president of the society and Mr. Currey president emeritus. Mr. Grover was not only a charter member but an officer of the society continuously for twenty-one years at the time of his lamented death. In a letter to the local paper he suggested the formation of the society a year before it was actually organized, and his interest in its progress and welfare continued unabated to the last.

Mr. Grover was a frequent contributor to the local press on subjects pertaining to the early history of his place of residence, especially to its aboriginal history. He was well informed as to the tribes of Indians who inhabited this region, and was familiar with the routes and adventures of the early explorers, paying particular attention to Marquette's life and the succeeding period of La Salle and Tonty's experiences. He acquired possession of a complete set of the Jesuit Relations in 73 volumes, in one of which is printed Marquette's journal of the famous voyage which he, in company with Joliet, made when they discovered the Mississippi river in 1673.

It is not easy to render an adequate tribute to one whose character and career made so deep an impression on the community of which he was a member. Because of the long association with him in the work of local history, which we both regarded as of the utmost importance, the writer of this sketch has been designated to undertake the task. Mr. Grover's published works include several studies, among which are, "Our Indian Predecessors, the First Evanstonians," "Father Pinet and His Mission of the Guardian Angel," "Antoine Ouilmette," and "Some Indian Landmarks of the North Shore." He was also the author of a volume entitled, "The History of the Les Cheneaux Islands," a group of islands twenty miles east of the island of Mackinac, rich

in the history of the missionaries and explorers, where he owned a summer home.

He delivered many lectures on his favorite subjects before audiences in Waukegan and other towns of the North Shore, and at a joint meeting of the Chicago Historical Society and the Evanston Historical Society held November 27, 1906, he read a paper which was later published in the proceedings of the former society. At the annual meeting of the Illinois State Historical Society, held in Springfield May 13, 1915, Mr. Grover read a paper on the "Indian Treaties Affecting Lands in the Present State of Illinois," which was printed in the "Transactions" of the society.

Mr. Grover was an industrious collector of aboriginal implements, trophies and objects of historical interest, especially of firearms and weapons, in great variety. Indeed his collection, arranged by himself, constitutes an extensive museum of itself. Interesting accounts of the manner in which these objects were acquired, and descriptions of the weapons and firearms, and souvenirs which include those of all wars of the republic, have been published from time to time. A leaflet on the general subject of collecting, its pleasures, difficulties and rewards, was printed recently by him which is dedicated, as he quaintly sets forth at the beginning:—"To my Friend, the Collector—the man who gathers the real treasures of earth for the joy of doing so and who goes through life ever seeking what he has not." The vein of humor which pervades this little treatise throughout, and the wide knowledge he possessed of strange and curious objects in every field of historical interest, renders its perusal a wonder and delight.

"We are all collectors in a way from childhood to the end," he concludes, "some of toys, some of lands and some of gold, and some of other so-called earthly treasures. Each must ever rank according to the excellence of his collection, and none of the collections are ever finished. And so the collector only does what the human race has always done, and will ever do; but in his little sphere he does it well, and, if with excellence, and with a use of idle hours that give him

joy or that bring pleasure and useful instruction, why should he not keep on collecting?"

At the memorial services, held in the lecture room of the Evanston Public Library, January 5, 1920, to honor the memory of Mr. Grover, Judge Orrin N. Carter whose residence is in Evanston, delivered an address filled with sentiments of high appreciation shared by a multitude of friends present on that occasion. "I am sure," he said, "it is not out of order for me to speak of him here as a member of the great profession in which he and I have been associated for years. Because of his long experience as attorney for the village and the city (of Evanston) there were few men equal to him in properly presenting to a court or jury cases pertaining to municipal affairs, and he tried many cases before me when I was on the local bench in Chicago."

Seeming to anticipate his approach to the end of life, Mr. Grover prepared a letter a few weeks before that event, to be read at his funeral; but as it was not discovered until after the services were held it was read by Judge Carter in the course of his memorial address. The letter was as follows: "The years of my life have gone by almost like so many months. There have been sorrow and care and a lot of hard work, but it has been a beautiful world just the same, which I have enjoyed (I hope not too selfishly) as I went along. I have found many true friends and in every one, when I have taken the pains to ascertain—something worth while. If I could speak a little farewell it would be a prayer of thankfulness for what my true friends have meant to me. To my family there are no farewells to say, for in the sacred temple of the home there has been that love and understanding that needs no parting words. And now, in the evening—whatever may be the sunrise in the great plan of human destiny—I meet it ready and unafraid."

Among many worthy men and women who have distinguished themselves in our community in the past, none have excelled this man in plain and unpretentious usefulness towards his family, friends and countrymen.